



Archived at the Flinders Academic Commons:
<http://hdl.handle.net/2328/27231>

This is a scan of a document number DUN/Speeches/2726
in the Dunstan Collection, Special Collections, Flinders University Library.
<http://www.flinders.edu.au/library/info/collections/special/dunstan/>

Title:

Speech at the opening of the Victoria Park housing development

Please acknowledge the source as:
Dunstan Collection, Flinders University Library.
Identifier: DUN/Speeches/2726

© Copyright Estate Donald Allan Dunstan

SPEECH BY THE PREMIER, DON DUNSTAN, AT THE OPENING OF THE
"VICTORIA PARK" HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

8/5/75

36
2726

Bill Menzel

(Ladies and) Gentlemen

I am very pleased this afternoon to be able to open (if that is the word) this further example of Menzel enterprise, the "Victoria Park" Development. Bill is a South Australian success story - and his overseas expansion is now making him a national success story. But today I don't want to dwell on Iplex Plastics. We are here concerned with housing and a quality residential environment for the City of Adelaide and adjacent inner-city council areas.

The encouragement of central inner city residential development has been a constant aim of my Government for a number of important planning and social reasons. One of the main motivations for this was simply that we believe people should have the widest possible choice of housing. Not everyone - not even necessarily a majority of people - wish to live all or part of their lives in a traditional suburban development.

Then again, by encouraging inner-city residential development we wish to see maintained the daily domestic life of a city environment. Without this any city becomes, after office hours, little more than a series of barren car parks, deserted streets, and lifeless shops and offices. We have always held that a healthy central city lives twenty-four hours, seven days a week.

Further, we believe that the encouragement of inner city living is, in terms of the general use of metropolitan and urban resources, economical. Inner city housing is generally of a higher density and thus uses less land; it places less strain on road and transport systems; it encourages a diverse range of life-styles and interests to be maintained; altogether it assists in creating a proper social and cultural mix.

Five years ago, such policies were new and, for some, outlandishly innovative. Now they are taking effect. There is a significant increase in the amount of new residential development underway in the Adelaide City Council area. In fact, as the Lord Mayor pointed out yesterday, residential development has taken off, with the value of new

residential building work rising from \$73,000 in 1971-72 to a current annual rate of \$3.5 million. In addition, there are important developments such as the new Angas Street Town House project by the Adelaide City Council, the constant redevelopment of existing city properties by private house owners and the quite revolutionary redevelopment activities of the South Australian Housing Trust.

While most people would be aware of the Trust's "Manitoba" site housing development in Carrington Street, the Trust's restoration activities are not so well known. Further, no one has yet realised how significant they are in terms of Australian housing policy. What the Trust has been doing, for some time, has been to buy existing 19th century cottages, terraces and row houses. It has then renovated and repaired these, and added them to the body of its rental properties. In this way it has, and is, achieving a number of important social objectives. Firstly, low-cost housing is made available in the City proper for an established population that otherwise would have been forced to move out. Secondly, the Trust's actions have now made it the City's main force in building conservation. Many of the small cottages it has restored are part of the old charm of inner Adelaide. In some cases (such as with the fine old brown terrace houses at 132 to 140 Carrington Street) very valuable buildings indeed have been saved from possible disadvantageous development.

This restoration and rental programme has so far encompassed some 117 properties. It is expected that it will continue and I believe that, together with the new housing developments occurring throughout the city, Adelaide will be the first Australian city effectively to halt inner city housing and social deterioration.

Which brings me back to "Victoria Park". At an early stage in the development of our inner-city housing policies, my Government (together with the City Council and the Bank of Adelaide) was pleased to help in the construction of these apartments through arranging for a special Council rating. For the truth is that much of the housing development occurring within the Adelaide City Council boundary is in spite of (decidedly not, because of) a very high rating and

valuation situation. The eventual adoption of a City of Adelaide Plan with firm residential areas and policies will alleviate this situation. Further, I understand that the Council is currently considering striking a differential residential rate to further assist in encouraging residential development and stability.

"Victoria Park" was designed by J.H. McConnell (who, incidentally, is a member of the Housing Trust). It was built by Fricker Bros. The building was commenced in January 1973, at a time when the building industry was relatively stable. Unfortunately, during construction prices sky-rocketed, and the final cost of the building was almost 25% more than the contract price, making the project very marginally viable, particularly with the current interest rates, which also increased by more than 50%.

However, in spite of this the flats were readily rented, and it is expected that over the years it will develop into a sound investment. Certainly the project has helped to stimulate development of the inner city's new urban standards, and it is for this reason that I am very pleased to officiate here today and to extend my congratulations to the Menzel family.

Thank you.

SPEECH BY THE PREMIER, DON DUNSTAN, AT THE OPENING OF THE
"VICTORIA PARK" HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

8/5/75

Bill Menzel

(Ladies and) Gentlemen

I am very pleased this afternoon to be able to open (if that is the word) this further example of Menzel enterprise, the "Victoria Park" Development. Bill is a South Australian success story - and his overseas expansion is now making him a national success story. But today I don't want to dwell on Iplex Plastics. We are here concerned with housing and a quality residential environment for the City of Adelaide and adjacent inner-city council areas.

The encouragement of central inner city residential development has been a constant aim of my Government for a number of important planning and social reasons. One of the main motivations for this was simply that we believe people should have the widest possible choice of housing. Not everyone - not even necessarily a majority of people - wish to live all or part of their lives in a traditional suburban development.

Then again, by encouraging inner-city residential development we wish to see maintained the daily domestic life of a city environment. Without this any city becomes, after office hours, little more than a series of barren car parks, deserted streets, and lifeless shops and offices. We have always held that a healthy central city lives twenty-four hours, seven days a week.

Further, we believe that the encouragement of inner city living is, in terms of the general use of metropolitan and urban resources, economical. Inner city housing is generally of a higher density and thus uses less land; it places less strain on road and transport systems; it encourages a diverse range of life-styles and interests to be maintained; altogether it assists in creating a proper social and cultural mix.

Five years ago, such policies were new and, for some, outlandishly innovative. Now they are taking effect. There is a significant increase in the amount of new residential development underway in the Adelaide City Council area. In fact, as the Lord Mayor pointed out yesterday, residential development has taken off, with the value of new

residential building work rising from \$73,000 in 1971-72 to a current annual rate of \$3.5 million. In addition, there are important developments such as the new Angas Street Town House project by the Adelaide City Council, the constant redevelopment of existing city properties by private house owners and the quite revolutionary redevelopment activities of the South Australian Housing Trust.

While most people would be aware of the Trust's "Manitoba" site housing development in Carrington Street, the Trust's restoration activities are not so well known. Further, no one has yet realised how significant they are in terms of Australian housing policy. What the Trust has been doing, for some time, has been to buy existing 19th century cottages, terraces and row houses. It has then renovated and repaired these, and added them to the body of its rental properties. In this way it has, and is, achieving a number of important social objectives. Firstly, low-cost housing is made available in the City proper for an established population that otherwise would have been forced to move out. Secondly, the Trust's actions have now made it the City's main force in building conservation. Many of the small cottages it has restored are part of the old charm of inner Adelaide. In some cases (such as with the fine old brown terrace houses at 132 to 140 Carrington Street) very valuable buildings indeed have been saved from possible disadvantageous development.

This restoration and rental programme has so far encompassed some 117 properties. It is expected that it will continue and I believe that, together with the new housing developments occurring throughout the city, Adelaide will be the first Australian city effectively to halt inner city housing and social deterioration.

Which brings me back to "Victoria Park". At an early stage in the development of our inner-city housing policies, my Government (together with the City Council and the Bank of Adelaide) was pleased to help in the construction of these apartments through arranging for a special Council rating. For the truth is that much of the housing development occurring within the Adelaide City Council boundary is in spite of (decidedly not, because of) a very high rating and

valuation situation. The eventual adoption of a City of Adelaide Plan with firm residential areas and policies will alleviate this situation. Further, I understand that the Council is currently considering striking a differential residential rate to further assist in encouraging residential development and stability.

"Victoria Park" was designed by J.H. McConnell (who, incidentally, is a member of the Housing Trust). It was built by Fricker Bros. The building was commenced in January 1973, at a time when the building industry was relatively stable. Unfortunately, during construction prices sky-rocketed, and the final cost of the building was almost 25% more than the contract price, making the project very marginally viable, particularly with the current interest rates, which also increased by more than 50%.

However, in spite of this the flats were readily rented, and it is expected that over the years it will develop into a sound investment. Certainly the project has helped to stimulate development of the inner city's new urban standards, and it is for this reason that I am very pleased to officiate here today and to extend my congratulations to the Menzel family.

Thank you.